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**KAZAKHSTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Students Work Beside Local Officials

**Kazakhstan's students get a first-hand look at local government work**

Hundreds of students in Kazakhstan have a new understanding of how their government works, after spending a day working beside their local officials. USAID and IFES organized Student Local Government Days in 26 Akimats (city councils) in May 2006.



Photo by IFES

*A student gains first-hand experience by working with a local government official. Photo: IFES*

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Ruslan, Tleysov, a tenth grade student at School #16 in Pavlodar.

The program, which is supported by the Ministry of Education of Kazakhstan, paired 359 students with 270 local government officials. The government employees explained their day-to-day job responsibilities and talked about the challenges that they face. For their part, students helped the officials with some of their work and provided suggestions for solving certain issues.

"This Student Local Government Day opened our eyes and now students are more aware of state policy, and this day definitely will have an impact on how students choose their future career paths," said Ruslan, Tleysov, a tenth grade student at School #16 in Pavlodar.

The Student Local Government Day project was part of an ongoing effort to teach Kazakhstani youth about how to actively participate in the development of their government and society. USAID and IFES involved local media in the project to bring credit to the local government office and encourage officials to increase transparency and openness.

Government officials expressed interest in learning about the issues that concern Kazakhstani youth. Many of the officials said they were pleased with the event and would host Student Local Government Day in the future. The Kazakhstani Youth Congress, a union of youth associations, nongovernmental organizations and movements, attended the Almaty Student Local Government Day and agreed to take over the project's future administrative tasks.